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H.R. 3503, Department of Homeland Security Support to Fusion Centers Act of 2015, as amended

FLOOR SITUATION

On Monday, November 2, 2015, the House will consider [H.R. 3503](#), *the Department of Homeland Security Support to Fusion Centers Act of 2015, as amended*, under suspension of the rules. H.R. 3503 was introduced on September 11, 2015 by Rep. Martha McSally (R-AZ) and was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security, which ordered it reported by voice vote on September 30, 2015.

SUMMARY

H.R. 3503 requires the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to conduct an assessment of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) employees, including those from DHS components, detailed to fusion centers to determine whether additional personnel should be detailed to such centers.

The bill also expresses the sense of Congress that any program established by the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) to provide state and local analysts located in fusion centers access to classified information be consistent with an [Executive Order](#) regarding the classification, safeguarding, and declassification of national security information.

The bill also requires I&A to provide a report within two years of enactment on whether a higher clearance level improves threat awareness and information sharing, evaluate the existing systems used to share information between the Department and state and local analysts at fusion centers, and sign memorandums of understanding with each fusion center regarding public disclosure of information.

BACKGROUND

A fusion center is a “collaborative effort of two or more law enforcement agencies that provide resources, expertise and information to the center with the goal of maximizing ability to detect, prevent, investigate, and respond to criminal and terrorist activity.” These centers serve as primary

focal points for the sharing of threat-related information on all levels of law enforcement.¹ The majority of fusion centers were created post-9/11 and are primarily located in urban areas.² H.R. 3503 is designed to enhance coordination and information sharing between DHS and the National Network of Fusion Centers and ensure state and local analysts have access to the necessary information to detect and prevent terrorist attacks.

COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) [estimates](#) that implementing H.R. 3503 would cost about \$1 million in fiscal year 2016, assuming appropriation of the necessary amounts.

STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information please contact [John Huston](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 6-5539.

¹ See DHS [National Network of Fusion Centers Fact Sheet](#)

² See CRS Report, [“The Interplay of Borders, Turf, Cyberspace, and Jurisdiction: Issues Confronting U.S. Law Enforcement,”](#) January 17, 2013.